

GLOSSARY / ACRONYMS

California redemption/Refund value (CRV): Similar to beverage container deposits in other jurisdictions. See “Deposit.”

Clearing system: The entity responsible for reconciling the deposits paid/redeemed.

Consumer container fee: A per unit non-refundable fee paid at the point of purchase. In Saskatchewan (Canada), the fee is called an Environmental Handling Charge. In Yukon, it is called a Recycling Fund Fee, and in the Northwest Territories it is called a Container Handling Fee. In other jurisdictions, like British Columbia, it is called a Container Recycling Fee. Unlike the others which are set by the government or other responsible entity, the Container Recycling Fee represents the net cost (net of unredeemed revenue) per container type.

Deposit: A sum of money that is charged on applicable beverage containers at the point of purchase, which retailers are required to collect from consumers. Intended to act as an incentive to recycle, deposits refunded when the consumer returns the empty container to an authorized redemption center or retailer for recycling.

Deposit initiator: The first agent (i.e. producer, bottler, distributor, importer) to collect the deposit on a beverage container sold in the jurisdiction.

Handling fee: A fee that is paid to redemption centers and retailers as compensation for receiving, paying out refunds for, sorting, and storing redeemed beverage containers. On a long-term basis, handling fees also cover expenses related to investments in reverse vending machines, electricity costs, space requirements, and additional personnel required to handle the containers. The fee is often paid by the bottler or distributor, but in some cases is paid by the state (e.g. California).

HDPE: High density polyethylene (plastic)

Material owner: The owner of the recyclable commodity (empty containers) that can sell the material to the market or keep the material to have it converted into raw material for new bottles or cans.

PET: Polyethylene terephthalate (plastic)

Processing fee: Per unit fee paid by beverage manufacturers to system operator

Processing payment: The fee offered to processors in Canada to sort and market beverage containers. It is paid on a per unit basis.

Processor: Entities that provide services that may include counting, weighing, and measuring, of empty beverage containers. They may be responsible for scrap buying/selling, overseas shipping and brokering, as well as materials transformation.

Producer: Brand owner, manufacturer or distributor of beverages. Produces beverages and places the products for sale on the market. Producers sell their products to retailers, who sell them to consumers.

Producer (administration) fee: Producer or administration fee: Also known as an extended producer responsibility (EPR) fee, this is a fee paid by beverage producers/importers/distributors to the DRS operator to cover the proportion of system costs not covered by material revenues and/or unredeemed deposits. Although different terms may be used in different jurisdictions, they all represent the same thing.

Redemption center (depot): A dedicated establishment for the collection of empty beverage containers in exchange for a deposit refund. These centers are typically situated in retail parking lots or warehouses on the outskirts of a town or city.

Retailer: Party that buys beverages from producers and sells them to consumers through a licensed establishment. In some DRSs, they are also responsible for accepting empty beverage containers from consumers and paying out deposit refunds.

Return-to-redemption center (depots): A DRS model in which consumers return empty beverage containers for recycling to privately-owned businesses established solely for this purpose.

Return-to-retail: One approach to DRS, where retailers selling beverages become legally responsible for accepting empty containers for recycling. Depending on the legislation, only stores of a certain size are required to participate, such as in Lithuania, while smaller stores may opt-out. This model is considered best-in-class as it is most convenient for consumers and also offers benefits for retailers through increased foot traffic, economic incentives, and an improved corporate image. Return-to-retail models are most common in Europe, but are also used in some North American DRSs.

Reverse vending machine (RVM): An automated mechanical device that accepts one or more types of empty beverage containers and issues a deposit refund. In some cases, they may also have a compaction function. Used by consumers at redemption locations.

Unredeemed deposits: The value of paid deposits on containers that have not been redeemed — possibly discarded in trash/as litter, recycled through other means, or lost.
